

New York on 9/11

Anti-racist unity with Muslims wins the day

By John Catalinotto
New York

Thousands of people gathered in City Hall Park near this city's World Trade Center site on Sept. 11 to show solidarity with the Muslim community and condemn the racism and bigotry whipped up by the right wing over a plan to build an Islamic community center in the neighborhood.

The pro-unity rally, called by the Emergency Mobilization Against Racism & Anti-Muslim Bigotry, greatly outnumbered a heavily publicized and financed Tea Party event protesting the community center. In addition, hundreds more anti-racists surrounded the Tea Party bigots to oppose their message of hatred.

Just two weeks earlier an orgy of publicity in the corporate media and a big advertising budget gave a false picture of broad support for the anti-Muslim gang. The same media also exploded with coverage of the pastor of an obscure, reactionary sect in Gainesville, Fla., after he threatened to burn 200 copies of the Qur'an on Sept. 11. Media attention to these viciously racist events sparked physical attacks on Muslims in the United States.

In response, progressive forces joined together to mobilize resistance to the anti-Muslim attacks. In New York they also exposed the role of the billionaire corporate backers of the Tea Party, which tries to present itself as representing workers.

In countries with large Muslim populations like Indonesia and Pakistan, thousands of people began to demonstrate at U.S. offices to protest the wave of anti-Muslim bigotry and xenophobia. In Afghanistan, mass demonstrations targeted NATO bases and government buildings.

For almost a decade, the U.S. government has used anti-Muslim propaganda to build support for its occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and its threats against Iran. But the anti-Muslim excesses at home were undermining U.S. diplomacy and its military occupations. In the week before the 9/11 anniversary, Gen. David Petraeus and Defense Secretary Robert Gates personally pressured Gainesville pastor Terry Jones to cancel the book burning.

It was the response of the people that turned the tide, however. In Gainesville, 300 rallied and marched in response to the threatened

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Capitalist profits fueled San Bruno blast

By Betsey Piette

Another deadly accident in the rapidly expanding and largely unregulated U.S. gas and oil industry has devastated a community.

A fire in San Bruno, Calif., on Sept. 9 killed at least seven people, injured more than 60 others, and destroyed or damaged dozens of homes over a 15-acre area in a residential neighborhood. This horrific fire resulted from the rupture of a natural gas line.

Prior to the blast, residents reported smelling gas in recent weeks, but Pacific Gas & Electric Co., the utility company that operates the 30-inch-diameter pipeline, denied that any of its crews had worked on the line. It should be pointed out, however, that PG&E has had 19 significant pipeline incidents since 2002.

According to experts, the 305,000 miles of onshore natural gas lines that span the U.S. routinely suffer breakdowns and failures. In 2008 alone, at least 365 people were killed and 1,553 injured from 44 significant gas pipeline accidents across the country. During the last two decades, more than 5,600 serious pipeline accidents have been reported.

The section of gas line that ruptured in this San Francisco suburb was ranked as high risk because it ran through a highly populated area.

Ironically, one of those killed in the inferno was Jacqueline Greig, a San Bruno resident and an analyst for the California Public Utilities Commission. She worked on a commission team that advocates for consumers and environmental protection pertaining to natural gas. Grieg had been reviewing PG&E's plans to upgrade its natural gas lines.

Carl Weimer, executive director of the Pipeline Safety

Trust, a nonprofit advocacy group set up after a 1969 explosion killed three people in Bellingham, Wash., said, "The industry always says that if you take care of pipelines, they'll last forever. But what we see over and over again is companies not doing that, and corrosion and other factors are causing failures." Weimer noted that once a high-pressure pipeline fails, anything can cause a deadly blast. (Philadelphia Inquirer, Sept. 11)

This catastrophic accident and others that have occurred over the years in both the gas and oil industries point up the inadequacy of government regulation of privately owned for-profit companies. First, there are not enough regulations to prevent accidents like this one. Second, the government does not enforce rules nor punish errant companies that flout health and safety concerns. (Another case in point is BP's ravaging of the Gulf of Mexico and the government's "do little, if anything," approach.)

Under capitalism, the mad dash for profits always takes priority over protection of human lives and the environment. In fact, the government's interest here is to protect corporate ownership and profits, no matter what, unless there is a mass struggle that forces the government to issue some protections. However, this does not get to the root of the problem.

What this disaster cries out for is socialized ownership of gas and oil resources and production. Unlike the current capitalist system, this would take the profit motive out of the picture. A national, regional or local people's planning board comprised of environmentalists, urban planners, engineers, safety experts, workers and community members would figure out how to provide the people with the safest and most economical energy while guarding the well-being of human beings and the environment. That's the way it should be. □

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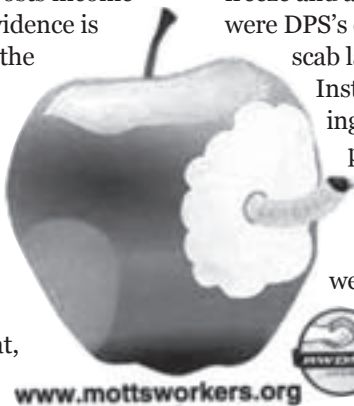
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ON THE PICKET LINE

By Sue Davis

Data show immigrants vital to U.S. economy

Contrary to what's stated on Fox News or at Tea Party rallies, immigrant workers play an incredibly important role in the U.S. economy. A report issued Aug. 30 in time for Labor Day, underwritten by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, reports, "Statistical analysis of state-level data shows that immigrants expand the economy's productive capacity by stimulating investment and promoting specialization. This produces efficiency gains and boosts income per worker. At the same time, evidence is scant that immigrants diminish the employment opportunities of U.S.-born workers." Author Giovanni Peri shows that the effect of immigration on wages is really positive — equivalent to a \$5,100 annual raise for workers on average between 1990 and 2007 (measured in constant 2005 dollars). Take that, Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin!



Mott's workers defend jobs, union as strike ends

The Mott's applesauce and apple juice workers held their picket line for 114 days. Dr Pepper Snapple bosses blinked on Sept. 13. That Monday, in the midst of the local apple harvest, DPS offered Local 220 of the Department Store union, which is a division of the Food and Commercial Workers union (RWD-SU-UFCW), very different contract terms than the workers had rejected on May 23. Gone were demands for \$1.50 an hour pay cut, with additional 50-cent cuts the next two years, for a total of \$2.50 an hour. Gone were the demands for a pension freeze and a big jump in employee costs of medical care. Gone were DPS's dreams of being able to run the plant with low-paid scab labor, jettison the skilled workers and kill the union. Instead DPS offered a wage freeze, with a \$1,000 signing bonus, reduced pension contribution and a 401(k) plan for new hires, and 20 percent employee costs for medical care. Local 220 RWDSU-UFCW voted 185 to 62 to ratify the three-year contract on Sept. 13. Though it wasn't a clear-cut victory, the workers were able to stop a highly profitable company's draconian attack. A very dangerous precedent would have been set for all workers in this recession if

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After immigrant worker is killed

L.A. community resists racist cops

By **Scott Scheffer**
Los Angeles

The anger of the mostly Central American migrant neighborhood of Westlake in Los Angeles erupted in the streets for four nights over a police slaying. A 37-year-old Guatemalan day laborer, Manuel Jamines, was shot twice in the head on a crowded street on Sept. 5. He was unarmed according to eyewitnesses.

ON THE PICKET LINE

the strike had failed. But the workers are returning to work with their jobs and their union intact, and in these times that's something to be really proud of. As Local 220 President Mike LeBerth told the New York Times, "Was it worth it? Yes, because we stood strong and the company knows we're a force to be reckoned with." (Sept. 13) Thanks, Local 220, for defending the right of all workers to a job with dignity and union representation.

Adjunct faculty protest in Chicago

The United Adjunct Faculty Association at East-West University in Chicago held a picket line Aug. 26 to protest EWU's unfair labor practices. That same week the National Labor Relations Board filed an unfair labor practice against EWU for violating federally protected rights of adjunct faculty. The problem: When word leaked out last spring that the adjuncts, who constitute 85 percent of EWU's educators, were organizing a union with the Illinois Education Association, they were all fired. (laborbeat.org)

Asian/Pacific Island workers abused

A powerful new report released Aug. 12 by the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, "Breaking Ground, Breaking Silence," exposes the workplace violations and conditions affecting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The report is based on the first hearing organized by APALA, the AFL-CIO and more than 20 national and local organizations in November 2009, with more than 200 Asian Americans and Pacific Islander trade unionists, allies, elected officials and academics participating. The workers testified about health and safety violations, immigrant worker exploitation, wage theft, employer intimidation and union suppression, among other issues. A series of hearings is now underway in selected U.S. cities. To learn more about the report and the hearings, visit www.apalanet.org.

Tell P.R. governor to stop anti-worker brutality

On May 21 the president of Local 481 of the Food and Commercial Workers union, Luisa Acevedo, and her son, Frank Pizarro, were brutally beaten at a fund-raising event for Puerto Rican Gov. Luis G. Fortuño. They were attacked by police while peacefully protesting the governor's recent signing of legislation outsourcing tens of thousands of public sector jobs and negating collective bargaining rights. Though they were hurt badly enough to need hospitalization, the two have since recovered. To send a message to Gov. Fortuño to stop all anti-worker actions and police brutality, click on Take Action on ufcw.org. □

After the slaying, militant demonstrations each night were attacked by police with tear gas and rubber bullets. Cops wielding batons charged into crowds of angry residents and demonstrators. People fled, regrouped and fought back. There were injuries on both sides and more than 30 arrests.

The rebellion alarmed Los Angeles Police Department brass who desperately attempted to "spin" the situation and hoped it would go away. "Manuel Jamines was intoxicated," they said. They claimed he held a knife high over his head and lunged at the police. They brought up his immigration status and said he was using a false name.

The mayor prophesized that the officers involved would be shown to be "heroic" by the investigation. But everything the cops said and did resulted in more anger from the community.

Organizers from the Southern California Immigration Coalition and other activists who have been out in the community leafleting each day found nothing but solidarity for Manuel Jamines.

One woman who received a leaflet on the street called SCIC to say she had seen the shooting. She had reported what she saw to the LAPD, but they painted a picture that was the opposite of what she had

told them, and she wanted to get the truth out. At a hastily-organized press conference, activists brought out Ana's testimony using only her first name. "Jamines had no knife when he was shot, and he didn't lunge at police," she had told them.

When the LAPD organized a "town hall meeting" on the evening of Sept. 8, Police Chief Charlie Beck was frequently shouted down. Even the establishment press saw the meeting as unsuccessful. It wasn't that the LAPD hadn't done their job thoroughly. They had their spokespeople lined up to praise the police. The chief promised there would be a "thorough" and "transparent" investigation.

But a long line of community residents tenaciously stood waiting for their chance at the microphone. The line stretched from near the front of the large room to near the back. Community members seemed to outnumber 100 to one the handpicked police supporters.

Many spoke of being mistreated for being Guatemalan. Some spoke in their native language of K'iche', a Mayan language which was the only language Manuel Jamines spoke and understood. Their remarks were translated into Spanish and English, and drove home the point that when the police shouted at him in Spanish, Jamines didn't understand them.

Westlake is a community of more than a few languages.

Others demanded to know why the police didn't use their much-touted "nonlethal" means when dealing with Jamines. To the jeers and shouts of the entire room, a police speaker responded that bicycle cops carry only lethal weapons.

Another man said the police were "out of control" in the neighborhood, and that people had gotten their teeth knocked out and their property stolen by cops.

Westlake is an occupied neighborhood and the cops are from the Rampart Division, whose brutality and corruption were exposed in the late 1990s. It forced a federal investigation and a consent decree that only lapsed this year. Fifty-eight cops were tried for beating and shooting people, committing theft and selling drugs in this very neighborhood.

Of course most of the cops got off, but it was one of the worst police corruption scandals in U.S. history. This history speaks volumes about racism towards migrant workers.

But if this wave of anger is any indication, consent decrees and public relations are the least of the LAPD's problems. Activists are in the streets of Westlake handing out leaflets for another demonstration scheduled for Sept. 18. □

Under threat of bosses' lockout

Football players express union solidarity

By **Monica Moorehead**

The 2010 National Football League season began on Sept. 9 with an unexpected but welcome show of solidarity displayed by the two opposing teams — the New Orleans Saints, who are the defending Super Bowl champions, and the Minnesota Vikings.

Players from both sides came on the field together before the start of the game raising their fingers in the air to show support for their union, the National Football League Players Association. On Sept. 12, more than 12 other teams carried out similar gestures before playing their opening games.

The players wanted to send a clear message to the NFL billionaire owners who are threatening a lockout against them next March when the collective bargaining agreement expires. If a new contract is not agreed upon by next spring, the entire 2011 football season will be in jeopardy of being cancelled.

The main issue behind the impending lockout is the billions of dollars in profits that the NFL teams generate in great part for the owners, especially in television revenues, food concessions, NFL gear sales, higher ticket prices, including luxury boxes, and much more.

The owners control 56 percent of these profits. The players are demanding a larger percentage of the revenues while the bosses are seeking to reduce players' salaries.

Several sports commentators have reacted negatively to NFLPA standing up for their rights, hoping to turn the fans against the players.

There is a misconceived notion by many sports fans in the U.S. and worldwide that all professional football players belonging



Cleveland Browns players take a heroic stand, Sept. 12.

torn knee ligaments, broken spinal cords and much more. An untold number of players become addicted to painkillers to deal with the long-term effect of these injuries.

Once these players face retirement, including early retirement, they get adequate health care coverage for only a

limited amount of time. Current players

also want to see more of the revenue go to providing health care for retired NFL players. Another important issue for the players is that the owners want to expand the 16-game regular season to 18 games next year. The NFLPA opposes this proposal as a further health risk to the players and a maneuver on the part of the bosses to squeeze even more profits out of the popularity of the players. In the end, NFL players are nothing more than highly paid gladiators who are superexploited for their skill, talent and popularity.

On Sept. 12, the NFLPA passed out cards to its members asking that they vote to decertify the union in order to block the owners from legally carrying out the lockout. "This is purely a procedural matter and is a non-story until March," said George Atallah, the NFLPA's assistant executive director. (Philadelphia Inquirer, Sept. 12) □

The violent nature of the NFL games creates tremendous career-ending and even life-threatening injuries for these players, including multiple concussions,

Cause of Detroit home fires

‘Natural disaster’ or corporate criminality?

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Detroit

A series of 85 fires struck several Detroit neighborhoods on Sept. 7. High winds of up to 50 miles per hour hit the city that day and blew down power lines, sparking fires that spread rapidly.

Initial reports from the corporate media and DTE Energy, which supplies local power to the bulk of homes, indicated that the blazes were the result of arson and theft of power service by Detroit residents.

However, a Detroit Fire Department official soon claimed that the fires directly emanated from the failure of DTE Energy to respond to calls about downed lines days before the fires rendered hundreds homeless.

DTE Energy has over \$20 billion in assets, yet it has closed neighborhood field offices that could have responded to the downed lines. It has also cut back on maintenance and fixing damaged power lines throughout the metropolitan area.

Once the fires began, Detroit emergency responders were incapable of adequately addressing the crisis. As a result of the layoffs and cutbacks of services, 911 operators did not answer calls. Some operators were reported to have hung up on residents.

In addition, the fire department has not hired the necessary personnel due to the draconian budget cuts implemented by the corporate-oriented administration of Mayor Dave Bing as well as the majority bloc within the City Council.

Mary Hargrave, whose mother lives on one of the most devastated streets, said

she had noticed a transformer that was sparking earlier in the day, but calls to DTE got no response. “This is ridiculous,” she said. “You can call them and they don’t do anything, but if you have a shutoff notice they’re right there.” (Detroit News, Sept. 8)

The fire department has about 500 fighters assigned to cover the city. On Sept. 7, only 236 were on duty and only 58 fire engine companies were open, a decline of 13 companies since 2005. There are at least 20 fewer firefighters in Detroit now than in 2009.

Dan McNamara, Detroit Fire Fighters Association president, said that his union members responded the best they could under the circumstances. McNamara said that the union has repeatedly warned the Bing administration that the city needs an additional 300 firefighters and should have 65 companies open and operational.

“Our firefighters put everything out there,” McNamara said. “Firefighters on their day off came to assist on scene, but while fires were going on, more calls came in, and we weren’t able to respond.” (Associated Press, Sept. 11)

Despite calls to 911 operators, it took some fire trucks up to 90 minutes to respond to the alarms. Residents were seen in some neighborhoods using water hoses in futile attempts to put out the flames.

Corporations, banks at root of municipal crisis

Detroit has been described as the epicenter of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. Due to the high rate of unemployment and predatory lending by financial institutions, there are

tens of thousands of vacant homes, businesses, factories and other structures.

Detroit officials say that the current budget deficit is in excess of \$300 million and growing, resulting in thousands of educational and municipal jobs being eliminated.

DTE Energy has contributed significantly to the crisis. Its lack of maintenance in the city could cause further disaster because of the proliferation of vacant and blighted structures. DTE also admits that it terminates essential electrical and heating services to more than 100,000 households annually.

DTE Energy has been blamed for the deaths of at least 12 people since 2009 due to the utility shutoffs. The company claims that the deaths are the result of “energy theft” by people whose services have been terminated.

The Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs continues to challenge DTE Energy, the city of Detroit and Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm to impose a halt to service terminations. Hundreds of thousands of households are unable to pay the high rates and face shutoffs, health and safety threats, more deaths and further destruction of homes.

In July of 2009, four members of the Reed-Owens family, including three children, died because their electricity was shut off despite the fact that the household was in bankruptcy, which is supposed to prevent the termination of services. The Moratorium NOW! Coalition launched a campaign demanding a halt to the shutoffs.

Top-level executives of DTE Energy

immediately called for a meeting with coalition members, who repeated their demand for a halt to the shutoffs. The corporation refused.

Several months later, Moratorium NOW! organized the residents of the Highland Towers apartments, where electrical service was terminated due to the negligence of the landlords. DTE Energy was forced to turn the power back on and pay for the relocation of the residents, yet the apartment building remained abandoned for a year.

Just recently, the abandoned Highland Towers caught fire, destroying a structure that could have easily been saved and remained occupied. However, the failure of municipal governments, the state Legislature and the governor to stand up to the banks, corporations and landlords has resulted in further abandonment and blight in Detroit and throughout Michigan.

The recent fires in Detroit, which Mayor Bing attributed to a “natural disaster,” stem directly from corporate control of energy resources and strangulation by the banks, which have drained the city’s resources through mass home foreclosures and debt-service payments. At a Sept. 8 press conference, Mayor Bing revealed that he had served for two decades on the DTE Energy board. After being questioned about his relationship with DTE Energy, Bing stormed out of the press conference.

The only short-term solution to the crisis in Detroit and other cities is an immediate moratorium on foreclosures, evictions and utility shutoffs as well as a freezing of debt-service payments to the banks. □

Chicago WWP conference to discuss

Overturning profits, racism and war

By **Kris Hamel**

A Workers World Party Midwest conference will take place in Chicago on Sept. 18. Members and friends of WWP and progressive activists involved in struggles in Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and other states plan to attend. The one-day conference, like the Western WWP conference in Los Angeles on Sept. 4, is a build-up to the party’s national conference in New York City, which will be held the weekend of Nov. 12-14.

The Chicago conference will be held in a most fitting venue — the union hall of United Electrical Workers Local 1110, whose members occupied the Republic Windows and Doors factory in December 2008 to stop an announced plant closing. Armando Robles, president of Local 1110 and leader of the occupation, is among the slated speakers.

How to fight back and win in this time of economic contraction for workers and attacks on the working class will be a key element of discussion throughout the conference. In addition to speakers, there will be plenty of open discussion on the conference’s main theme: “What is socialism? How we can fight for a future where people come before profits, racism and war.”

Scheduled speakers include Larry Holmes, a founder of the Bail Out the People Movement and national leader of WWP; Julie Fry, a national organizer of the revo-

lutionary youth group FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together); Sara Flounders, WWP leader and co-coordinator of the International Action Center in New York; Abayomi Azikiwe, editor of the Pan-African News Wire, Detroit; Teresa Gutierrez, WWP leader and coordinator of the May 1st Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights in New York; Jill Hill, a long-time Chicago activist and health care worker; Joe Iosbaker from the Freedom Road Socialist Organization; Larry Hales, an organizer for the Oct. 7 National Day to Defend Public Education; Martha Grevatt, a longtime UAW autoworker activist and former national secretary of Pride At Work; and Jerry Goldberg, a leader in the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions & Utility Shutoffs in Detroit.

The WWP Midwest conference takes place on Saturday, Sept. 18, at the UE union hall, 37 S. Ashland Ave., Chicago. Doors open at 10 a.m. for registration and a light breakfast. The program runs from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. and includes lunch. There is no registration fee, but a small donation on a sliding scale will be asked for lunch; no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

For more information, contact WWP in Chicago at 312-229-0161 or e-mail chicago@workers.org; in Detroit, contact 313-680-5508 or detroit@workers.org; in Cleveland, 216-531-4004; or visit www.workersworld.net. □

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Workers World Party REGIONAL CONFERENCES



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Sept. 18

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Southern

DURHAM, N.C.

Oct. 23

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WORKERS WORLD PARTY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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save the date **new york city**

The capitalist crisis & how to fight it

By Fred Goldstein

A working-class view

The “experts” on Wall Street and in the big business media force themselves to rave over the fact that the private sector created 67,000 jobs in August. Never mind that this represents a decline from the monthly average of 90,000 private sector jobs created over the last year. And never mind that 141,000 government census workers were laid off last month.

Above all, never mind that around 30 million workers are either unemployed, underemployed or have dropped out of the workforce — about one in five.

On another note, the auto industry, which has been showing profits, is boasting that it added 55,000 jobs this year. But they laid off 324,000 workers in the year before the auto bankruptcy. Washington gave General Motors and Chrysler \$85 billion to shrink the industry, lay off workers and shut down factories.

By now it has become commonplace to say that this is the worst downturn since the Great Depression. Now more and more capitalist economists are saying it is a “structural” crisis.

But merely repeating what most workers know full well does not shed any light on this crisis. The working class needs to know the nature of the crisis in order to understand how to get out of it.

The most important questions yet to be explained by official “experts” are: What’s behind this worst jobless recovery in the past 70 years? And why can’t the system start itself up again?

And how can it be that after \$10 trillion in government bank bailouts, a \$787-billion stimulus package and a 12-month upturn in business activity, 30 million workers still need work?

The essence of capitalism: class exploitation

It’s important to clarify what capitalism is.

Even the most diehard advocates of capitalism can see that the system is failing. The capitalists themselves and the big business media, politicians and pundits are all talking about capitalism.

They put forward various notions about capitalism. Some say capitalism is characterized by “market forces,” buying and selling; some emphasize the earning of profits and the profit motive; others emphasize private property as the essence of capitalism.

All these things are true. But they don’t get to the bottom of it. The essence of capitalism is never talked about by the establishment pundits.

The essence of capitalism is that it is a system of class exploitation. It is the domination of society by a tiny minority of rich exploiters and oppressors who do not work. They live off a very large class of workers who have no way to live other than to work — unless they are laid off or part of the army of permanently poor and unemployed, which is overwhelmingly African Americans, Latinos/as, Asians and the Indigenous, especially youth.

What is the basis of this domination? The capitalist class owns everything that the working class needs to live and survive — the factories, the mines, the farms and fields, the offices, the stores, the hospitals, transportation and the banks — which sit at the summit of society because they control the money.

This class of capitalist owners is collectively the ruling class and thrives off the labor of the working class.

The working class, on the other hand, needs access to the means of survival but cannot get it unless they sell their labor

power to some boss. Labor power is the ability to work, the ability to create useful things or services, the ability to create new value. Our class, the working class, must sell its labor power every day, every week, every month, year after year, over and over again, to obtain from the bosses what we need to live, in the form of wages or salaries. The bosses, on the other hand, get richer and richer from appropriating the products of our labor and selling them for profit.

This is the system of wage slavery.

Crisis of overproduction

In return for our labor power we get a wage or a salary. A wage is the amount of money we need to survive. Wages, whether they are high, medium or low — as is the case for most African Americans, Latinos/as, Asians, Indigenous people and women — stay within the very narrow range of subsistence.

Because the capitalists want to make as much profit as possible, production soars and eventually outstrips the collective ability of the workers to buy all the products of their labor at a price high enough to give the bosses profits. When profits go down, production stops. Workers get laid off and the economy goes down.

That is called a crisis of overproduction and is behind the present crisis. Of course, there is no overproduction in relation to human need. The latest reports indicate that record numbers of families are living in homeless shelters. There is also a record number of empty houses because of foreclosures and evictions.

The homeless cannot afford to buy the houses at a price that would give the developers a profit. This is capitalist overproduction. The same is true for autos, shopping malls, large appliances and so on.

Profit is the goal of all production under capitalism. The capitalist class constantly strives to increase its profits at the expense of the workers. Since the beginnings of capitalism, the most effective way to do this has been to put in new technology that either reduces the need for workers, reduces the skills of workers or speeds up workers.

In the past 30 years, the capitalist class worldwide, led by the U.S. capitalist class, has invested in more and more technology. This has made workers produce more and more goods and services in less and less time and for lower and lower wages. This process has led to greater and greater crises of overproduction.

That is what is behind the jobless recovery today. The bosses have used technology to create a worldwide competition among workers. They have used robots, satellites, computers, the Internet and business software to speed workers up and force them to produce more and more.

When the present crisis began there was a glut of housing, a glut of automobiles, a glut of computer chips and so on. Workers had produced so much that they could not buy back what they produced at prices that would give the bosses a profit. So the system began to shut down.

That is why eight million workers were laid off within a year and a half. And for the same reason the capitalist system cannot get started up again.

The capitalist experts know that the various bailouts and the stimulus package are the only things that kept the system from totally collapsing. Now the stimulus package is scheduled to run out in the coming months.

So the Obama administration has come up with a measly \$50 billion, so-called “jobs bill.” Whether or not it will be

passed is a big question. But even if it is, it will not make a dent in rehiring the 30 million workers in need.

It takes the creation of 150,000 jobs a month just to keep up with population growth. Furthermore, poverty is spreading along with unemployment. Thus the capitalists, by throwing workers out of work, lowering wages and speeding up production, are contracting the capitalist market. Only an enormously expanding market, one that would create half a million or more jobs every month for years to come, could provide the working class with enough jobs on the basis of capitalist hiring.

The capitalist class and its system are doing nothing but aggravating unemployment and increasing foreclosures, poverty and homelessness in a thoroughly racist manner. African-American, Latino/a and Asian unemployment levels are up to double that of white workers. But an increasing number of white workers are also being swept into the ranks of the unemployed.

In other words, the present crisis is more than just a cyclical crisis. It is more than just a structural crisis. There is nothing left to restructure. It is a crisis of the profit system itself.

The system has reached an impasse. It cannot provide jobs at living wages. Capitalism is no longer able to move society forward. The system of class exploitation has run into the same kind of dead end that it arrived at in 1929 and the Great Depression. The profit system is dragging society down and the working class with it, as well as threatening the ecology of the planet.

Fight for massive gov’t jobs program

The only way to alleviate the present crisis of mass unemployment is to force the government in Washington to give jobs to all the workers who need them — jobs at living wages with benefits.

During the Great Depression, the Roosevelt administration was forced to create a real jobs program where workers were hired directly by the government. The Works Progress Administration was set up, under which every worker who qualified was entitled to get a job. Some workers got training. There was also a National Youth Administration that gave jobs to youth. Before the WPA, the short-lived Civil Works Administration created jobs for 4 million workers, beginning November 1933.

In the late 1930s the WPA was the largest employer in the country. From 1935 to 1943 8.3 million workers got jobs. They built roads, dams, public buildings, schools, hospitals, planted trees, created art and were responsible for thousands of

projects that are still in existence today.

This was not a trickle-down program where the money goes to the bosses who then, after taking their cut of profits, administrative salaries and subcontracting, etc., hire some workers. But the \$50-billion program coming out of Washington now is of this kind.

The workers and communities need to be mobilized to fight for a massive government jobs program. We must fight to redirect the trillions now being given to the banks and the hundreds of billions that go to the Pentagon and use them to alleviate the dire suffering of the workers during this unemployment crisis.

The ultimate goal should be to go beyond just alleviating this crisis under the system of class exploitation and eliminate the system altogether. That means taking control of the economy and the means of survival, the means of production and distribution, for the working class and the oppressed and using these resources for human need, not for profit. In a word, to fight for socialism.

And finally, it must be emphatically stated that the struggle for socialism and to abolish capitalism requires the building of a revolutionary working-class party, steeped in the theory of Marxism and imbued with its revolutionary spirit.

Goldstein is author of the book, “Low-Wage Capitalism,” a Marxist analysis of globalization and its effects on the U.S. working class. This article reflects the gist of a talk he gave at a public meeting in Detroit on Sept. 11. A leading member of Workers World Party, he has also written numerous articles and spoken on the present economic crisis. For further information visit www.lowwage-capitalism.com.

Homelessness, poverty shoot up

Capitalist statisticians are beginning to lift the lid on some of the devastation caused by the economic crisis.

According to the latest government reports, the poverty level in the U.S. rose in 2009 from 13.2 percent to 15 percent - the largest jump since 1959, the first year such records were kept. This means that one in every seven people in the U.S. lives in poverty.

The official poverty level is artificially low and does not calculate the cost of medical care, transportation and child care, among other things. All these costs have been rising. These rising costs will be included beginning next year, meaning that the official poverty rate will shoot up again.

Additionally, the number of families living in homeless shelters has soared from 131,000 to 170,000 from 2007 through 2009, reflecting foreclosures, evictions and layoffs. This does not count people living in tent cities all over the country.

— F. G.

‘Low-Wage Capitalism’ author speaks in Midwest

A standing-room-only audience turned out Sept. 11 in Detroit to hear “Low-Wage Capitalism” author Fred Goldstein speak on “What the economic crisis means for workers and the ever-growing poor — and how to strategize a working-class fightback.” Goldstein, a national leader of Workers World Party and contributing editor of Workers World newspaper, addressed a WWP/Harriet Tubman School public forum.

He explained the workings of the capitalist profit system of wage slavery and exploitation and the character of the current economic crisis within the context of the Midwest’s historical importance in manu-

facturing and subsequent deindustrialization. A lively discussion took place afterwards and many copies of “Low-Wage Capitalism” were autographed and sold.

The meeting also heard a report from Kris Hamel about the case of Ahlam Mohsen, an Arab-American college student who is facing felony charges for putting a pie in the face of U.S. Sen. Carl Levin as an anti-war protest. Journalist Abayomi Azikiwe talked about an unprecedented rash of home fires that broke out in Detroit on Sept. 7 and the role of banks and corporations in causing them. The program was chaired by Andrea Egypt.

— Kris Hamel

Youth in Gainesville reject Muslim-bashing

By Dianne Mathiowetz
Gainesville, Fla.

Several hundred people rallied and marched against anti-Islamic bigotry here on Sept. 11 despite the presence of scores of police, who barricaded the street. Most were youth and students, many from the University of Florida at Gainesville. They chanted, “When the Muslim people are under attack, what do we do? Stand up, fight back!”

After the right-wing leader of a small, fundamentalist church, the Dove World Outreach Center, announced that its members would burn copies of the Qur’an on Sept. 11, the local Students for a Democratic Society called for the demonstration.

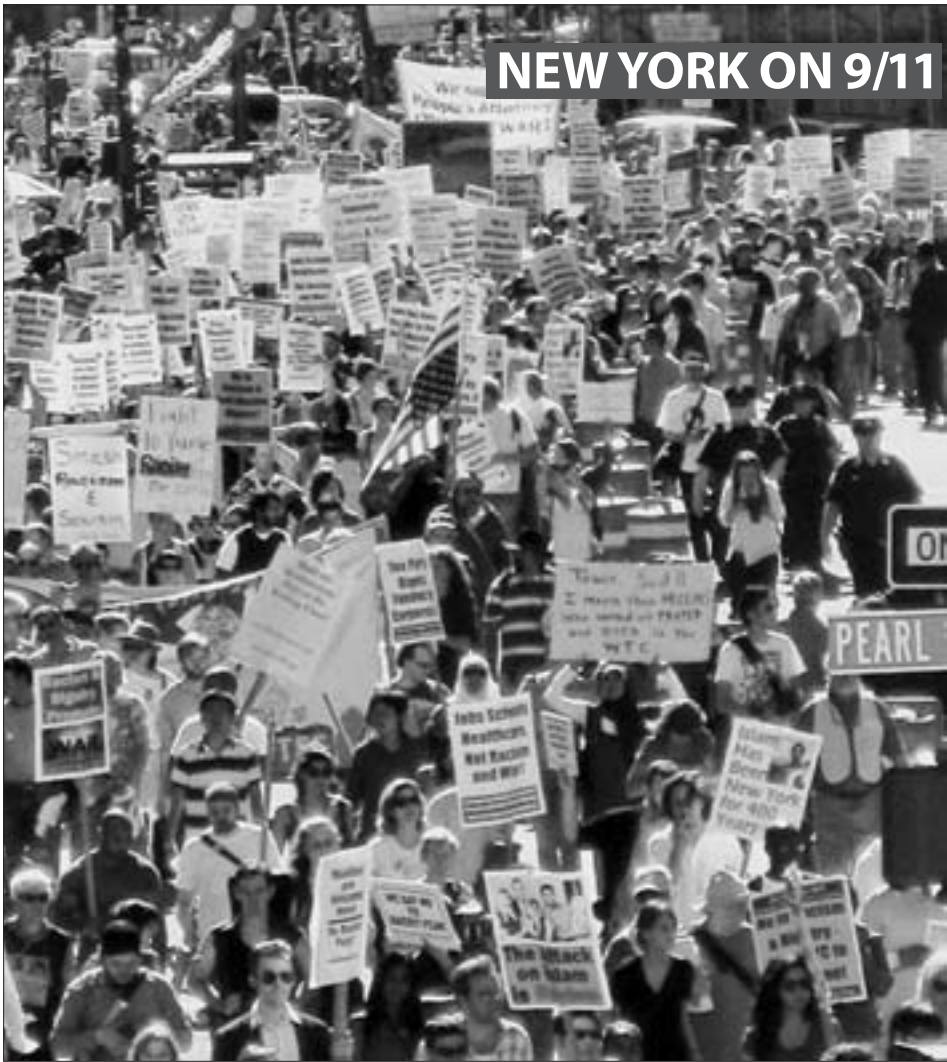
For weeks the media paid enormous attention to the head of the church, Terry Jones, and to opponents of a proposed Islamic community center in New York City. The airwaves and printed pages across the U.S. have been filled with the most vitriolic, racist and inflammatory rhetoric scapegoating Muslims.

Although Jones finally called off his premeditated hate crime, the student activists held firm to their goal of organizing a mass rejection of bigotry and intolerance in their community.

Dozens of media outlets from around Florida and the world were present at the demonstration, showing how important it was to have a strong show of unity and solidarity with Muslims and others under attack in this time of economic crisis.



PHOTOS: FIGHT BACK! NEWS



WW PHOTO: GREG BUTTERFIELD

Continued from page 1

Qur’an burning, organized by the Gainesville Area Students for a Democratic Society. There were also demonstrations in solidarity with Muslims in Minneapolis; Chicago; and Asheville, N.C. And the night before the Sept. 11 anniversary, other thousands joined a candlelight vigil in New York to support the Islamic Community Center.

In The Hague, Netherlands, 200 joined the anti-racist NBK group to protest anti-Muslim politician Geert Wilders and his racist PVV party. Wilders spoke at the Tea Party action in New York, along with U.S. ultraright figures.

New Yorkers defend Muslim rights

In New York, home to more nationalities than any other city in the world, all of them seemed represented among those who answered the call of the Emergency

Mobilization Against Racism & Anti-Muslim Bigotry. People from Boston, Washington and in between joined thousands of New Yorkers in a display of the strength of the anti-racist movement that embraced young and old, people of all the colors of the city and region, gay and straight. The demonstrators exuded a spirit of unity and cooperation by chanting, marching and then chipping in their labor to clean up at the end of the day’s action.

International Action Center co-coordinator Sara Flounders, one of the rally chairs, said that “10,000 people joined today, coming from dozens of communities in the city. They represented neighborhood organizations, Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist and other religious groups, political and anti-war groups and human rights groups. Many workers wore their union caps or T-shirts. We had to organize on a shoestring budget,” said

Anti-racist unity with Muslim



WW PHOTOS: MONICA MOOREHEAD



Flounders, “but we showed that a broad section of the city won’t let the racists dominate 9/11.”

Just naming Flounders’ co-chairs gives a modest idea of the breadth of the rally’s support: Sayel Kayed of American Muslims for Palestine; Dr. Asha A. Samad-Matias of the Safrad Somali Association and the Muslim Women’s Coalition; Honduran-born Lucy Pagoada of the May

1 Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights; and African-American Amadi Ajamu of the December 12th Movement.

Some of the speakers well known to progressive activists included former congressperson and Green Party presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney, human-rights leader Ramsey Clark and anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan.

The message from the nearly 50 community and religious leaders greeting the Emergency Mobilization rally was solidarity with the Muslim community and unity of all the forces in the struggle against racism, scapegoating and U.S. wars abroad.

One of those speakers, Larry Holmes of the Bail Out the People Movement, said, “We brought out the real New York City — a city of workers and people of color from all around the world. This mobilization started because we were forced to defend our Muslim sisters and brothers. It will continue as we open up the struggle at home to fight for jobs, education and social benefits.” □

Protests erupt across Afghanistan

By G. Dunkel

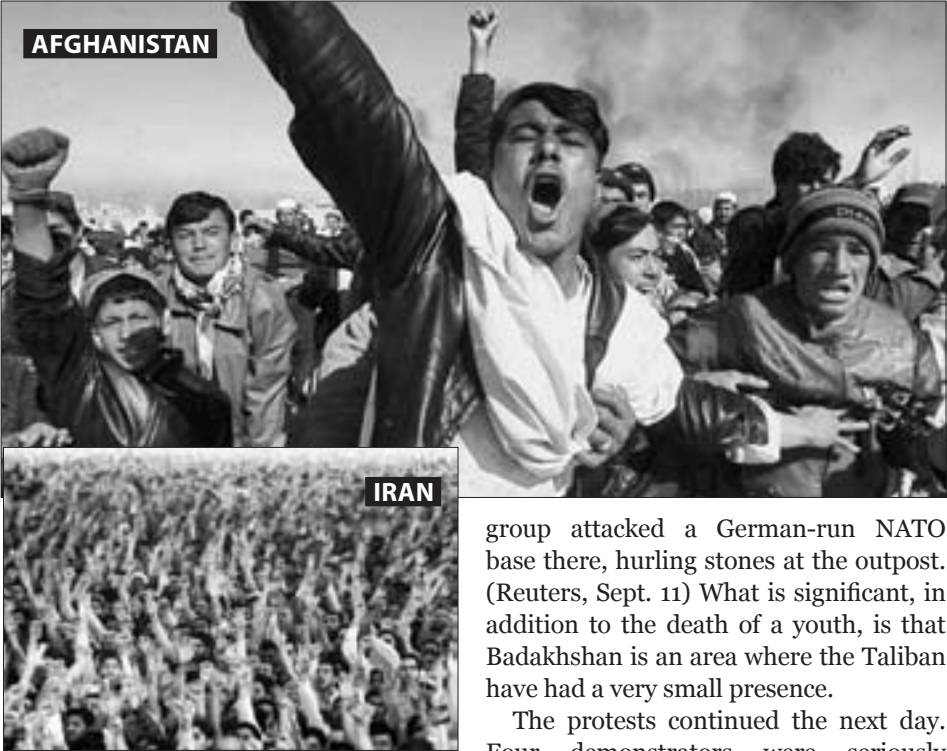
The threat to burn the Qur'an at a small church in Gainesville, Fla., on the ninth anniversary of the attacks on the World Trade Center stirred up worldwide outrage, especially in Muslim countries in Central and South Asia.

Demonstrations erupted in Pakistan, India, Indonesia and Palestine even after the church in question, under tremendous pressure from the U.S. political and military establishment, said it would not go ahead with the planned burning.

The biggest and most militant protests occurred in Afghanistan, where the Qur'an has had a significant moral and political impact for centuries. Afghanistan's occupation by troops of the very country where the burning was planned made the protests more significant.

Not only have the Afghan peoples rejected foreign occupation, but the U.S. drone attacks that kill whole families have aroused great popular anger. At the end of August, for example, in northeast Afghanistan, a nighttime raid by NATO commandos left eight civilians dead and 12 wounded.

The local governor, Mohammed Ismail, said a group of tribal elders he had sent to the village had returned with details. Among the dead were two women and a child. "It was a cruel act against the civil-



ians," he said.

The mass media in the U.S. have tried to blame these political protests on the Taliban, pointing to major demonstrations in the city of Jalalabad and south of Kabul, where the Taliban have a major presence. CBS reported Sept. 9 that the Taliban were distributing leaflets to imams south of Kabul to read at Friday prayer service.

But a crowd estimated at 10,000 protested Sept. 10 on the streets of Faizabad, the capital of Badakhshan, and one young protester was shot dead when a smaller

group attacked a German-run NATO base there, hurling stones at the outpost. (Reuters, Sept. 11) What is significant, in addition to the death of a youth, is that Badakhshan is an area where the Taliban have had a very small presence.

The protests continued the next day. Four demonstrators were seriously wounded when Afghan police opened fire as thousands tried to storm several government buildings in Pul-e-Alam, the capital of Logar province, south of Kabul, a provincial official told Reuters.

Protesters also gathered in the capital, Kabul, and in four other provinces, mainly in the west of the country.

In western Ghor province, one of the poorest regions of Afghanistan, about 2,000 people marched in four districts of the province to condemn the planned Qur'an burning. In Farah, another western province on the border with Iran, hundreds gathered in Bala Blok district shouting anti-U.S. slogans. (Agence France Press, Sept. 10)

BBC television showed demonstrators in the main northern city of Mazar-i-

Sharif marching through the streets with their fists high and burning a U.S. flag on the grounds of the historic Blue Mosque.

A former Afghan prime minister, Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai, said of the demonstrations: "This shows that the disaffection of the Afghans toward Americans is very, very strong. It's the result of all those killings of civilians they keep doing." (New York Times, Sept. 10)

The U.S. campaign supposedly "to win the hearts and minds" of the Afghans has failed. The opposition to U.S. imperialism's occupation can organize quickly and politically to bring the masses out into the streets. While the Taliban are obviously a major part of this opposition, other forces are also involved. But it is in Washington's interest in prosecuting its war against the Afghan peoples to put the Taliban front and center because they have been so thoroughly demonized for their socially reactionary positions.

For example, the U.S. puts forward the claim that the main source of funding for the Taliban is their control of the opium-growing regions in Helmand and other southern provinces. However, a recent article in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, which relies on a U.S. House of Representatives report — "Warlord, Inc.: Extortion and Corruption Along the U.S. Supply Chain in Afghanistan" — makes it clear that a major source of Taliban funding is the payments they get from U.S. subcontractors for delivering supplies to the 200 or so bases the U.S. has in the country.

U.S. imperialism, a technological colossus, is confronting severe political difficulties and a military stalemate in impoverished Afghanistan all because of the resistance of the population to the war and occupation. □

ns wins the day



WWW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO



Iraqi prisoners escape U.S. custody

By Gene Clancy

On July 15, as part of their ballyhooed "withdrawal" from Iraq, U.S. officials under the command of Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno handed over an infamous U.S. prison, Camp Cropper, to the Iraqi puppet government. Although they ceremoniously gave a large wooden key to the Iraqi military, about 200 of the 1,500 inmates remained under U.S. control, guarded by U.S. soldiers. The 200 include former members of Saddam Hussein's government and senior foreign and Iraqi insurgents.

A few days later, four "high value" prisoners escaped from the Iraqi-controlled part of the facility, now renamed Camp Karkh. Several Iraqi guards and the new warden also went missing.

Many pundits in the U.S. were aghast and wondered aloud about the quality of

the Iraqi military that is supposed to take up the slack left by departing U.S. troops.

Now, the U.S. occupation has a new reason to be embarrassed. On Sept. 9, four more "dangerous" Iraqis escaped from the same prison, only this time it was from the U.S.-controlled section, dubbed Compound 5 and guarded by U.S. soldiers. The U.S. command offered no details on how the escape happened, who was to blame, or who the people were that escaped. An Iraqi military spokesperson, Maj. Gen. Qassim al-Moussawi, said that the men were facing the death penalty.

A spokesperson for new U.S. Ground Commander Gen. Lloyd Austin, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the "sensitivity" of the matter, said the general had apologized to Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki.

As of Sept. 12, none of the escapees had been captured. Residents of the Ji-

had neighborhood located near the prison reported a virtual lockdown of the area: Local people were banned from driving their cars.

A place for torture

Camp Cropper was originally built to handle captured members of the government of Saddam Hussein. Hussein himself was held there during his illegal trial and execution.

During the so-called surge in Iraq, Camp Cropper became infamous, along with other U.S. prisons in Iraq. While the U.S. media trumpeted the policy of "winning hearts and minds," U.S. troops indiscriminately swept up civilians in brutal raids and deposited them in prisons like Camp Cropper. ABC-TV in 2007 reported widespread overcrowding with sewage backed up and covering the floor. One inmate reported being unjustly arrested

and suffering for two years before being released with no hearing or trial.

Gen. Odierno, an architect of the "surge," was referred to as a "bash, mash and slash" officer by other members of the military. (Shrapnel online magazine, Aug. 10) Apparently, this was supposed to be a compliment.

In the past Odierno was often noted for opposing an early pullout of U.S. troops. Sympathizers with his position decried the "weak" Iraqi forces fielded by the Iraqi government.

The theme of an imperialist power despising its own puppet allies, often with racist overtones, is a constant one, starting with the Romans and continuing with the British in India and Afghanistan and the U.S. in Vietnam. Seldom if ever does an occupying power consider that their own imperialist policy is the problem in the first place. □

HONDURAS

National strike shows strength of Resistance

By Heather Cottin

The U.S. corporate press was silent when thousands of Hondurans poured into the streets of Tegucigalpa on Sept. 7 to join the 12-hour national strike called by the National Front of Popular Resistance (FNRP). It affected all 18 provinces and paralyzed the streets of 11 Honduran cities. Traffic was stopped on roads and bridges. (Rebelión.org, Sept. 11)

Two days before the strike, Honduran armed forces and police invaded and occupied the Autonomous University of Honduras to break up a three-month hunger strike by the union of university workers. Three of the strikers, including a 70-year-old man, were sentenced and incarcerated for “sedition.” Students, teachers and workers called it “indefensible” to attend classes. (resistenciahonduras.net, Sept. 12)

The military laid low on Sept. 7, but the next day 17 workers were massacred in a shoe factory in San Pedro Sula. The government of Porfirio Lobo has not investigated these deaths, nor any of the other suspicious violent deaths that have occurred since the military coup in June 2009.

“The minister of security has, without proof or investigation, immediately called this a case of drug gang rivalries,” said a representative from Women for Human Rights (MDH), which is investigating the killings of Honduran women.

“This amounts to a second assassination for the victims and their families, in order to silence the voice of the population.” (Rebelión.org, Sept. 10)

Lucy Pagoada of Honduras Resistencia USA explained: “The purpose of this massacre is to discourage and confuse workers who are supporting the Resistance. The fact that these murders took place inside a shoe factory threatens all workers who are organizing in the Resistance.”

Honduras has become one of the most dangerous countries in the Western Hemisphere. Irina Bokova, director-general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, has called for “urgent action to stem the rise in violence.” This includes the murder since the coup of nine members of the media. (speroforum.com, Aug. 31)

These murders and a concerted disinformation campaign are part of a strategy. “Lobo has installed a media blockade,” said Berta Caceres, head of the Civil Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras. “There is no information, and so the [FNRP] has dispatched commissions of information throughout ... Latin America, Europe and the United States to show the reality of what we are living in this country, especially the violations of human rights.” (Rebelión.org, Sept. 9)

Berta Oliva, president of the Committee of Relatives of the Detained and

Disappeared of Honduras, told the media about the discovery of another mass grave containing the bodies of more than 100 people who had been reported missing from June through August last year, right after the coup. (tiwy.com, Aug. 31)

Los Necios, the youth movement allied to the FNRP, says that the U.S. Department of State has been directing the repression out of the office of U.S. Ambassador Hugo Llorens. “Lobo lacks the intelligence, the ability and the minimum legitimacy to run the government. The Lobo government can’t be in full control of the situation and needs the CIA to administer the crisis with their special agents. ... For decades our continent has suffered heavy attacks by the sick beast of North American capitalism.” (resistenciahonduras.net, Sept. 12)

Since 1984, U.S. troops and commanders stationed at the U.S. military base in Palmerola have been the power behind the throne in Honduras and much of the rest of Central America. On June 28, 2009, the U.S.-supported coup kidnapped and flew legally elected President Manuel Zelaya to Palmerola.

Juan Barahona, FNRP leader, stated that the U.S. military in Palmerola is deeply involved in the militarization of Honduras. This repression has a purpose, he said, explaining that the coup and the illegitimate election of Lobo were achieved “to advance the neoliberal project for domination and colonization of

Honduras.” Berta Caceres added, “Lobo is trying to sell our rivers and natural resources.” (Rebelión.org, Sept. 9)

The Lobo government is desperate, said Barahona. His sham government is negotiating an IMF loan that will, according to Barahona, “saddle future generations of Hondurans with millions of dollars of debt.” (ansalatina.com, Sept. 11)

The resistance is growing daily. Despite the repression, it mounted a petition campaign for a new Constitutional Assembly that has been signed by more than 1.25 million Hondurans. The petition calls for a new constitution that guarantees human rights for all and stands for the return of President Zelaya and more than 200 exiles.

The FNRP is calling for a national mobilization and general strike on Sept. 15, the 189th anniversary of Honduran independence from Spanish colonialism. Students, teachers, peasants and workers who oppose privatization and militarization of their country will be out en masse to protest and present their demands.

Zelaya, who is coordinator general of the FNRP, spoke in support of the Resistance from exile in the Dominican Republic: “Those who believe in democracy and equality, against those who arbitrarily defend the dictatorship and the exploitation of the poor, are definitively the Honduran people, who are struggling heroically against the designs of a bloody oligarchy.” (tercerainformacion.es, Sept. 9) □

On 12th anniversary of their arrest

Activists demand release of Cuban 5

By Brenda Ryan

The plight of the Cuban Five is never far from the minds of progressive people around the world. This Sept. 12, exactly 12 years since their arrest in the United States for defending Cuba from terrorist attacks, organizations and individuals intensified demands for their release through petitions, demonstrations and ad campaigns.

The International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban Five sent a petition to President Barack Obama calling on him to issue an order of executive clemency, so the five Cubans — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, Antonio Guerrero and Fernando González — can return to their country and their families.

The petition also requested that the government immediately grant visas to Adriana Pérez and Olga Salanueva, so they can visit their spouses, Hernández and René González, respectively. The U.S.



Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar, René González Schwerert, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez and Fernando González Llort.

government has denied them entry visas 10 times; they have not been able to embrace their spouses for nearly 12 years.

The Cuban Five were falsely convicted of conspiracy to commit espionage and other related charges and given sentences ranging from 15 years to two consecutive life terms. They came to the U.S. not to spy on this government but rather to monitor right-wing Cuban groups in Miami that had committed terrorist acts

against Cuba, including the bombing of several Havana hotels in the 1990s. In fact, the Cuban government presented evidence that the Five had collected to the FBI. Instead of taking action against the terrorists, however, the U.S. government arrested the five anti-terrorists.

While the Five remain in prison, actual terrorists like Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch remain free to walk the streets of Miami.

On the anniversary of the arrest of the Five, activists are also remembering one of the most horrific terrorist acts against Cuba, the mid-air bombing of Cubana Flight 455 on Oct. 6, 1976. All 73 people aboard the passenger plane were killed.

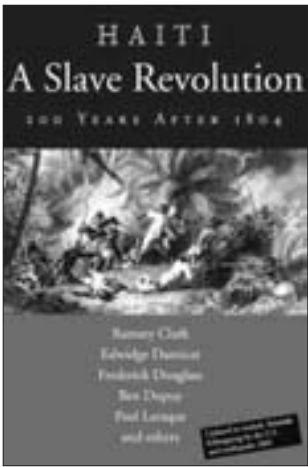
Posada, who orchestrated the bombing, was arrested in Venezuela but escaped from prison in 1985 and has lived in Miami since 2007. Venezuela has demanded his extradition but the U.S. government has refused to hand him over. Posada was to go on trial in Texas for perjury and obstruction of justice, but the trial was postponed early this year.

Danny Glover and Ed Asner, co-chairs of Actors and Artists United for the Freedom of the Cuban Five, presented a letter to Obama on Sept. 12 calling for executive clemency. It was signed by numerous celebrities, including Susan Sarandon, Oliver Stone, Martin Sheen, Pete Seeger, Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt.

Glover visited Gerardo Hernández in prison in Victorville, Calif., in August, just after Hernández was released from “the hole,” where he spent 13 days in solitary.

The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal from the Five during its last term. As solicitor general, Elena Kagan submitted a brief to the court on behalf of the Obama administration arguing that the court should not review their case.

It is up to the people to put continuous pressure on the government to end this horrific injustice and let the brave Cuban patriots return to their country. You can sign the petition to Obama at <http://www.thecuban5.org/PETITIONNOW.html>. Information on a Washington Post ad campaign is at www.freethethefive.org. □



HAITI: A Slave Revolution 200 Years after 1804

New edition includes Aristide’s kidnapping by the U.S. & the 2010 earthquake.

First published in 2004 as a joint project of the International Action Center and the Haiti Support Network. This is not a traditional history book or textbook, but a people’s history. In the preface the editors state: “This book is going to combat 200 years of racist indoctrination and propaganda about the Haitian Revolution.”

New edition: 272 pp., photos.

Available at Leftbooks.com

IN SOMALIA

Imperialist forces try to bolster weak puppet regime

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

On Sept. 9 U.S. Marines seized the German-owned M/V Magellan Star vessel off the coast of Somalia. The Antiguan-flagged, 8,000-ton container ship had been taken over by Somalis the day before.

The Marines took nine Somalis into custody and claimed there were no injuries in the operation. This assault on the Magellan Star was launched from the USS Dubuque after the Turkish frigate TCG Gokceada responded to a distress call from the German-owned ship.

Both the USS Dubuque and the TCG Gokceada are part of a flotilla of warships that patrol the Gulf of Aden in so-called anti-piracy maneuvers designed to ensure safe passage through one of the most lucrative trading waterways in the world. The multinational force that is permanently stationed in the Gulf of Aden off the Horn of Africa was formed in January 2009.

Although the U.S., the European Union and other states have warships in the Gulf of Aden ostensibly to fight piracy, the struggle for control of Somalia has intensified in recent weeks. Both areas on land and in the Gulf of Aden are contested zones for imperialist hegemony over this strategic region of the African continent.

According to a recent article published by the BBC, “At least 23 foreign vessels with more than 411 crew members are currently held by pirates, according to Ecoterra International, an organization monitoring piracy. Last year there were more than 200 attacks by Somali pirates — including 68 successful hijackings — and ransoms believed to exceed \$50 million in total were paid, the organization said.” (Sept. 9)

Inside Somalia the military and political struggle for the future of the state has escalated. On Sept. 12, five troops of the U.S.-backed Transitional Federal Government were killed by the resistance forces, which control the majority of areas within the capital of Mogadishu as well as large sections of the central and south of the country.

On Sept. 9 nine people were reported killed when the Al-Shabab resistance movement launched attacks on the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) forces that are stationed at the Mogadishu

airport. At the time of the attacks TFG President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed was consulting with a delegation that included the United Nations special representative for Somalia, Augustine Mahiga.

Al-Shabab announced in recent weeks that it would step up its offensive aimed at driving out AMISOM troops, who are mainly Ugandan and Burundian soldiers. During a July African Union summit in Kampala, Uganda, the organization’s current chair and host, President Yoweri Museveni, said he would deploy additional soldiers to the Horn of Africa nation in retaliation for a bombing inside Uganda that killed dozens of people.

Uganda is heavily supported by the United States, which supplies military equipment and training for its armed forces. Museveni stated on Sept. 2 that his government was prepared to dispatch 10,000 troops to Somalia in order to prevent a defeat of the TFG.

French Press Agency reported, “The African Union force in Somalia has boosted its size and set up nine new positions in Mogadishu where it is protecting the government from a fierce Islamist insurgency.” The African Union’s deputy representative to Somalia, Wafula Wamunyinyi, reported that the “numbers of troops have gained up slightly above 7,000 to 7,200 since July.” (Sept. 3)

Wamunyinyi went on to state: “We have steadily increased our area of control of Mogadishu. We have made progress and taken new positions. If we get the correct support, troop deployment and equipment, we are going to expand our presence towards the north [of the capital].”

Resisting puppet regime

Both the resistance movements, Al-Shabab and Hizbul Islam, have vowed to repel any efforts to expand the bases of the AMISOM troops in Somalia. In a recorded message, Al-Shabab leader Ahmed Abdi Godane (also known as Sheikh Abu Zubeyr) urged his fighters to “redouble their attacks against Somalia government troops and African Union peacekeepers.” (Garowe Radio, Sept. 12)

Abu Zubeyr continued, “The clashes in Mogadishu that Al-Shabab carried out are against our enemy: the Somali government backed by the African Union. I appeal to the people to join the war against

the TFG.”

Meanwhile, Hizbul Islam leader Sheikh Dahir Aweys appealed to AMISOM forces “to leave the country,” claiming this is the only solution to resolving the conflict now escalating inside Somalia. Most analysts agree that without AMISOM troops, TFG would collapse immediately.

The George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations have provided military assistance aimed at propping up the TFG regime. Since Obama came into office in 2009, military and political support for TFG and AMISOM has increased.

In late August the Obama administration reiterated its support for its current course in the Horn of Africa. In addition to support for TFG and warships off the coast, the U.S., along with France, also maintains a military base in neighboring Djibouti.

John Brennan, Obama’s counterterrorism adviser, condemned recent military actions by the resistance forces of Al-Shabab and Hizbul Islam. Brennan stated, “Al-Shabab’s vision of Africa stands in

sharp contrast to the vision of the overwhelming majority of Africans.” (Associated Press, Aug. 24)

Yet the U.S. imperialists have long had designs on dominating Somalia and the Horn of Africa. In 1992 under George H.W. Bush, the U.S. deployed thousands of Marines to Somalia in a purportedly humanitarian mission called “Operation Restore Hope.”

The mission was soon exposed as a military occupation and met fierce resistance from the Somali masses. U.S. troops and United Nations forces were compelled to withdraw after a year inside the country.

As a result of the increasing role of African resources within the world capitalist system, particularly oil and strategic minerals, the U.S. is increasing its military involvement on the continent. Anti-imperialist and anti-war organizations in the U.S. must demand that the self-determination and sovereignty of African peoples be respected and that the Pentagon withdraw its military advisers, troops and naval vessels from the entire region. □

Juan Mari Bras, ¡presente!



Above, Student Leaders arrested during the 1948 strike at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. From left to right: Harry García-Domenech, Jorge Luis Landing, José Gil de la Madrid, Juan Mari-Brás, Juan Noriega-Maldonado and José M. Tejada.

TOP PHOTO: ARCHIVO CENTRAL DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE PUERTO RICO, RÍO PIEDRAS.



JUAN MARI BRAS, founder of the Pro-Independence Movement (MPI) and later the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, died on Sept. 10

at the age of 82. His contributions to the Puerto Rican struggle spanned more than half a century. Workers World will have an appreciation of the life of this important leader for independence and socialism in an upcoming issue. □

‘Our pension funds to oppress Palestinians? No way!’

The first U.S. petition campaign to divest workers’ pension funds from companies that supply Israel with equipment to oppress Palestinians was launched in Los Angeles on Sept. 8.

The divestment campaign is opening up a new front in the fight against Israeli apartheid. This effort seeks to keep the pension funds of California public workers and teachers from being invested in companies like Caterpillar, Motorola, Northrop Grumman, Veolia, Elbit Systems, United Technologies, General Electric, Terex and ITT. These firms supply heavy construction and military equipment to Israel that is used to destroy Palestinian homes, wall Palestinian communities off from one another and keep the people under constant threat of being expelled from their homeland.

The California Public Employees Retirement System and the California State

Teachers Retirement System have nearly \$2 billion invested in companies like those above. Elbit Systems also provides technology for the U.S.-Mexico border wall.

At a press conference outside the Israeli Consulate, people lined up to become the first to put their signatures on the petitions. The campaign has six months to acquire 434,000 valid signatures. To view the press conference video, the endorsers or learn more about the petition campaign, go to IsraelDivestmentCampaign.org.

The accompanying photo shows, left to right: Andy Griggs, United Teachers of Los Angeles activist; Shakeel Syed, executive director of the Islamic Shura Council of Southern California; Yael Korin, Israeli-American researcher; and Rosie Martinez, labor activist, Latino Caucus of Service Employees Local 721.

— Report and photo by Cheryl LaBash



After Sept. 11 — what next?

The thousands who united on Sept. 11 to say no to the Tea Party and its racist allies have given a new impetus to the anti-racist and workers' struggle. They faced a right-wing opponent with a month's head start, big funding and enormous media publicity. But they stood strong to defend their Muslim sisters and brothers and confront the hate-mongers, resisting pressure from the government and corporate media. In the end, they outnumbered and outshouted the elements who follow Glenn Beck, Newt Gingrich and their ilk. Even the rightist New York Post had to admit that the anti-racists out-organized the right-wing gang.

What next?
We raise this because this is no time to sit back and relax. It was one battle in a long class struggle. The Tea Party has been organizing for more than a year. These racist reactionaries hope to capture the anger and anxiety over the capitalist economic meltdown to mobilize first against the Obama administration and then against any progressive social programs still in place, from Social Security to the right to an abortion.

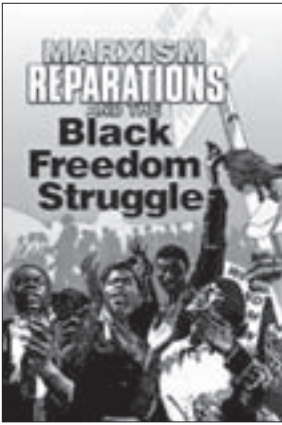
Those who came out in solidarity on Sept. 11 — in New York, in Gainesville, Fla., and elsewhere — have two big opportunities in the coming weeks to keep up the momentum. These are opportunities to inject the same enthusiasm, the same determination to combat racism, the same desire to maintain political independence from the capitalist political parties that we all showed in force on Sept. 11.

The first action is the "One Nation Working Together" gathering in Washington, D.C., set for Oct. 2, called by the NAACP and Service Employees Local 1199 in early July. It has received support from many community and union organizations. Like similar actions that took place at the end of August in Washington and in Detroit, it will raise broad demands for a massive jobs program with equal justice and quality public education for all. It will be important both to support the general anti-racist and pro-jobs thrust of the action and to also bring to the tens of thousands of participants a program that is independent of the Democratic Party.

The next action takes place just five days after that Saturday in Washington. It's an initiative of youth, students and educational workers of all types, building on the successful action of last March 4. The action is set for Oct. 7, again to mobilize across the United States for local actions, and it has drawn even more support from student, community and union organizations to defend and improve both the quality of public education and the access to education for working-class students and students of color.

The forces that came out on Sept. 11 have a role to play at these two actions: first, to build them in the general struggle for anti-racist solidarity; next, to inject into them the militant, combative spirit and opposition to U.S. imperialist wars that has already dealt a blow to the reactionaries. Doing this will surely elevate the struggle for all workers' rights. □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle



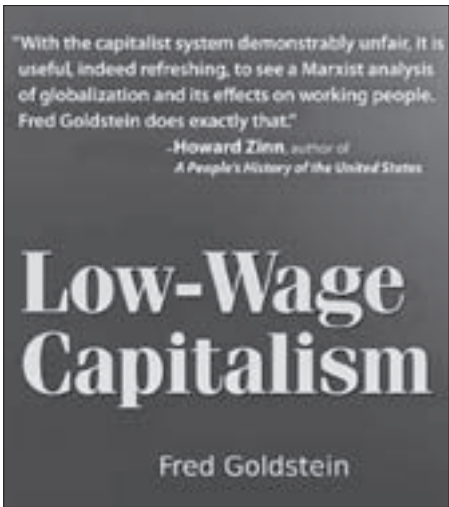
An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead.
Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination Larry Holmes
Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery Sam Marcy
Black Youth: Repression & Resistance Leilani Dowell
The Struggle for Socialism Is Key Monica Moorehead
Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights and Global Justice! Saladin Muhammad
Alabama's Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping and Segregation Consuela Lee
Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior Mumia Abu-Jamal
Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? 40th Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion John Parker
Racism and Poverty in the Delta Larry Hales
Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions Pat Chin

Low-Wage Capitalism

What the new globalized high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle in the U.S.

Fred Goldstein's book provides an easy-to-read analysis of the roots of the current global economic crisis, its implications for workers and oppressed peoples, and the strategy needed for future struggle.

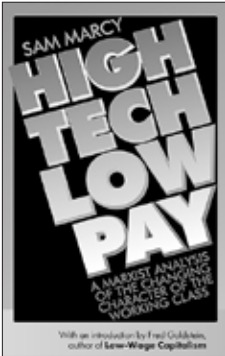
Paperback, 336 pages. Includes graphs, charts, bibliography, endnotes and index.



HIGH TECH, LOW PAY

A Marxist analysis of the changing character of the working class
Twenty years ago Sam Marcy wrote that the scientific-technological revolution is accelerating a shift to lower-paying jobs and to more women, Black and Latino/a workers. A new introduction by Fred Goldstein explains the roots of the current economic crisis, with its disastrous unemployment, that has heightened the need for a working-class resurgence.

Available at Leftbooks.com and bookstores around the country



Open letter to AFL-CIO head Rich Trumka

Wall Street, during the current economic depression, has thrown millions of workers out of their jobs. Public worker unions and the jobs and services they provide are now coming under attack. Wall Street is demanding that unions give up hard-won contract benefits, from health benefits to pensions. Wall Street banks are bailed out with our tax monies, while workers' homes are being foreclosed on by those very same banks. At the same time, corporate purchased politicians in the U.S. Congress are threatening to attack worker benefits such as Social Security and Medicare and threatening to privatize public services such as education.

Working people, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Canadian border to the Mexican border, represent the overwhelming majority of the U.S. population. The only way for Wall Street to continue to succeed in criminally stealing workers' jobs and benefits is by getting workers to fight each other by broadcasting racist propaganda over the big business media, meant to prevent workers from uniting to defend their common interests.

Wall Street is funding the anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim racist hysteria because they understand that they must divide the workers against each other, in order to succeed in their criminal plot. Under these circumstances, the only way that the union movement can progress is by openly defending immigrants and Muslims against these racist attacks. If we do not fight this racist propaganda then we will find our members divided against each other and that will deny labor the unity needed so as to defend our interests.

It means that every union should have thrown their political weight behind the 9/11 counter-demonstration to the Wall Street-sponsored 9/11 hate rally against the Islamic community center two blocks from the World Trade Center location. The official trade union movement failed to mobilize to oppose a vicious hate rally that was meant to divide worker against worker. Since the official labor movement did not show up and do what was necessary, we need to begin a serious discussion about how to make sure that this never happens again.

Racism must not be allowed to infect the labor movement. The Tea Party bigots and haters are not "populists." They are funded with millions of dollars from Wall Street and with lots of free propaganda from the big business media.

We must properly respond during this critical moment in our history. The labor movement's strength is in our numbers and our unity. Take away that unity and there will be no numbers. We must proclaim, loudly and clearly: An injury to one is an injury to all!

Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues*

This ground-breaking book documents revolutionary Cuba's inspiring trajectory of progress towards liberation of sexualities, genders and sexes.

Available at Leftbooks.com

The labor movement needs to speak loudly against anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim racist attacks or we'll face the consequences of a destroyed labor movement that is divided against itself. On 9/11 we should have been front and center in opposition to the Tea Party hate rally. Our labor movement needs to show its unity against these bigots and haters. If we show our unity against these bigots, we will be victorious.

Si, se puede!

— **Mike Gimbel,**
retired Executive Board member and
Central Labor Council delegate
of Local 375, AFSCME

Mott's strike a key test case

I am very glad to see you highlighting the strike at Mott's in Williamson on the front page of your newspaper.

While I agree completely that the Mott's workers are "defending the rights of all working people," I think it is justified to go one step further in this characterization: The Mott's struggle is one of the key struggles being waged over the future of the U.S. working class. The strike is being used as a test case by corporations, who want to see whether worker solidarity will hold firm. If support for the striking workers crumbles, it will be a clear signal to other employers that they can proceed apace with direct attacks on wages.

A broad-scale movement towards wage-cutting is virtually assured by the latest economic data. Second quarter productivity figures from the BLS released in August showed a sharp decline of 1.8 percent. This is widely taken by the business class to mean that we have reached the limits of profit growth attainable by speedups. A second avenue of profit growth — capital investment in technology — is also ruled out by the current "slackness of demand," that is, we are already over-producing more than people can afford to buy. This leaves only one clear avenue for growing profits: a direct attack on wages, bolstered by maintaining high unemployment.

What does this mean for workers? We must aggressively assert class-wide solidarity with the Mott's workers. The three most important ways we can do this are: Organize support for the Mott's picket line, contribute to the Mott's hardship fund, and build the boycott of Mott's products. Even small contributions make a great difference in this key struggle!

You can learn more about these actions at www.mottsworkers.com.

In solidarity,
Sam, New York

Since this letter was received, a settlement in the Mott's strike has been announced. See On the Picket Line, page 2.



FRANCE

Workers stage general strike against pension cuts

By G. Dunkel

Two major struggles are currently underway in France.

To solve its financial problems on the workers' backs, the Sarkozy government wants to increase the retirement age and make it harder to get a full pension.

To distract attention from its attacks on workers' gains and point the blame at some scapegoats, it is also carrying out large-scale expulsions of Romas (formerly called "Gypsies"), even though they have the right to stay in France as citizens of another European Union country. It is also deporting immigrants without papers and is revoking French citizenship from immigrants, and even people whose parents were immigrants, who have been convicted of attacking a French official.

The unions responded on Sept. 7 with the biggest general strike that France has seen since 2003, when the unions and the

left defeated an earlier pension "reform" proposal.

Between 2.5 million and 3 million people marched in 220 demonstrations all throughout France. According to the CGT, a major French labor confederation, 270,000 people marched in Paris; 200,000 in Marseilles; 110,000 in Toulouse; and 35,000 in Lyons. Even more significant, a larger than normal number of workers actually filed the paper-work needed to officially strike and then walked out.

The French Constitution grants workers the right to strike, even in companies without unions. Most of the time small and medium-size companies don't have unions to file the necessary strike notices. However, on Sept. 7 many workers at these smaller companies went out.

According to public opinion polls, about 70 percent of the people in France oppose their government's pension pro-

posal. They see a decent pension as a right for older workers and a way to open jobs and careers for younger workers.

According to l'Humanité, the daily newspaper of the French Communist Party (PCF), what led to this massive turnout was "the feeling of injustice, already strongly felt after the bill was introduced in June, which gained strength after the revelation of the close ties between the government and big money," which had reached scandalous proportions.

On Sept. 4, the labor unions and various human rights groups, such as the League for Human Rights, held 137 rallies involving hundreds of thousands of people all over France to protest Sarkozy's attacks on the Romas and foreigners. In Paris, the march was led by a group of Romas whose encampment at Choisy-le-Roi was destroyed on Aug. 12. (www.cgt.fr).

Both the LHR and the Young Communists (JC), a large youth group affiliated

with the PCF, drew a close connection between the attacks on the Romas and immigrants and the attack on pensions.

The JC said, "Sarkozy reawakened Vichy," in a speech he made laying out his program against immigrants and Romas in Grenoble. Vichy is shorthand for the fascist French government that collaborated with Nazi Germany during World War II and that also rounded up Romas.

Their call to the Sept. 4 and 7 demonstrations states: "Let's thwart the trap of false divisions: all together for the retirees! But why is the right stirring up all this old rotten muck? They want to get us lost in the smoke of false divisions. It is the crisis of capitalism unleashed by the bankers and bosses which has just made our life harder. But Sarko has absolutely no desire to see the people rise up against the true thugs and begin to actively finish with capitalism." (www.jeunes-communistes.org) □



agents at Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in 1975, has been unjustly imprisoned since 1976. The complete message can be read at www.workers.org.

Sisters, brothers, friends and supporters,

... Thinking back to those days on Pine Ridge, what I remember is the funerals. There were so many funerals. ... So many families lost loved ones.

There was a powerful force at work on the reservation back then, one with a single purpose — to stamp out the last resistance of the Lakota people.

We (the Oglala traditionals and members of the American Indian Movement) stood up because we

Birthday message from Peltier

'My fight for freedom is not over'

Editor's note: Following are excerpts from a statement issued by Leonard Peltier on the occasion of his 66th birthday on Sept. 12. Peltier, who was framed up by the FBI for the shooting of two

were trying to defend our People. It was the right thing to do. We had — have — the right to survive.

The land was being stolen, too ... used for mining mostly. No thought was given to the disposal of toxic waste. The rivers were full of poisons. Not much has changed, I hear. ...

In those days, though, the reservation was torn apart by a tribal dispute and the federal government armed one group against another. The result was a long line of tragedies for the People of Pine Ridge ... and for the People who were there that day in June 1975.

I honestly understand the pain and anguish suffered by all concerned and I have been part of that suffering.

I have watched people lie on the witness stand countless times. ...

I have heard judges admonish prosecutors for allowing false evidence in and, in some cases, for participating in the falsification itself.

The government hid evidence, too. Or manufactured it.

... if the American standard of justice is still "be-

yond a reasonable doubt," why am I still here?

Last year, as you know, my parole was denied. That was a disappointment, but I am not defeated. My fight for freedom — for my People and myself — is not over. I am a pipe carrier and a Sundancer. Abandoning The Struggle is not — never will be — a consideration. ...

When I look back over all the years, I remember all the good people who have stood up for me, for a day or a decade. Of course, many have stayed with me all along the way. I think of the hundreds of thousands of people around the world who have signed petitions for me, too ... people on the poorest of reservations to the highest of political offices.

As we have learned over these many years, my freedom won't come quickly or easily. To succeed, the coming battle will have to be hard fought. Please continue to help my Committee and legal team as you have always done. Your support is more important now than ever before. When freedom comes, it will be due in no small part to the actions you take on my behalf. ...

**Doksha (Later),
Leonard Peltier**

CIA statistics show

Chinese Revolution improved workers' lives

By Caleb T. Maupin

The Central Intelligence Agency, a ruthless enforcer of Wall Street's drive for profits, publishes "The World Factbook." It gives updated statistics for every country, some of which measure quality of life and societal health, such as life expectancy, infant mortality, literacy, unemployment and industrial production. In this series, Workers World examines some surprising conclusions, all using the CIA's own statistics. Even though these statistics often understate gains compared to United Nations figures, they can't help but show that countries benefit by breaking with imperialism.

India and China were both impoverished countries at the end of World War

II. In both India and China, foreign corporations dominated the economy. In both countries there was mass starvation and poverty. In both countries there was extreme repression of women and various ethnic minorities.

After World War II, both countries had mass movements. However, their outcome was very different.

In 1947, India was granted formal independence from the United Kingdom and re-organized as a "Federal Republic," a political transformation that changed the governmental structures but left the capitalist economic system intact. Modern India has been hailed as a "model" of neoliberal capitalism.

The Chinese Revolution of 1949, two years after India's independence, was totally different, however. It was a socialist revolution led by the Communist Party.

Not only did China's government drastically change, but so did its economic and social system. The Chinese government, unlike the government of India, massively redistributed land, built up powerful collectively owned industries, combated sexism and racism, and built a People's Republic based on the ideology of "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought."

A comparison of life today in these two large countries, even according to CIA figures, shows that the socialist road of China, as opposed to the capitalist road of India, has been much more prosperous for the population at large.

The infant mortality rate of China is 20.25 per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate of India is 50.5 per 1,000 live births, more than double that of China. The life expectancy of the average person in India is 66 years of age. The

life expectancy of the average person in China is 73. The CIA shows that literacy in China is at 91.6 percent, while it is only 61 percent in India.

Worse, in India the literacy rate for women is only 47 percent, meaning that less than half of India's women can read. The literacy rate for women in China is 87 percent, less than 10 points behind men.

The CIA reports that the percentage of people living below the poverty line in China is 2 percent, while it is 25 percent in India.

When comparing the "free market" neoliberalism embraced by India with China's economy, which today incorporates some capitalist measures but is built on the back of the 1949 socialist revolution, it is clear which system is superior. Even the CIA cannot hide this fact. □

Histórico triunfo de los trabajadores domésticos

Por Dolores Cox
Nueva York

Después de una campaña militante de seis años de marchas, de encuentros y de cabildeo, Domestic Workers United (Trabajadoras Domésticas Unidas, DWU por las siglas en inglés) ganó una Carta de Derechos para las/los Trabajadoras/es Domésticas/os en el estado de Nueva York. El 31 de agosto, el gobernador de Nueva York, David Paterson, firmó este proyecto de ley y la convirtió en una ley histórica; entre en vigor después de 90 días.

Esta es una victoria de los derechos civiles para las/los trabajadoras/es domésticos que han luchado durante 75 años contra la exclusión de las leyes laborales federales, incluyendo la Ley Nacional de Relaciones Laborales de 1935 (de la época de Franklin Roosevelt), la Ley sobre Seguridad y Salud Ocupacional y disposiciones en materia de discriminación en la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964.

Esta es la primera legislación proporcionando los derechos básicos y protecciones a los EE.UU. a los trabajadores domésticos. Se centrará en el estado de Nueva York 200.000 trabajadores domésticos, incluso niñeras, cuidadores de ancianos y amas de casa, que son principalmente mujeres de color.



31 de agosto en Harlem, Nuevo York.

La ceremonia de firma tuvo lugar en el Centro Cultural Dwyer de Harlem. Miembros/os del DWU, organizaciones de base militante, la NAACP y de otros sindicatos asistieron, además de los políticos federales y estatales y los medios de comunicación.

Los oradores calificaron a la ley como “un hito” y “abriendo nuevos caminos”, y señaló que daría “la paridad, la justicia, la equidad y la igualdad en el lugar de trabajo” para estos “cu-

idadores esenciales” que son “una fuerza de trabajo a menudo invisibles”. Ellos llamaron a Harriet Tubman un inspiración para su lucha.

Los patrocinadores del proyecto de ley fueron la senadora estatal Diane Savino, asambleísta Keith Wright y Presidente del Comité de Trabajo de la Asamblea Susan John. Savino dijo que las/los trabajadoras/es domésticas/os hacen posible otro trabajo y afirmó que esta ley envía un mensaje claro en todo el país que los derechos de las trabajadoras domésticas deben ser reconocidos.

Wright, quien dijo que era el nieto de trabajadores domésticos, agradeció y aplaudió la tenacidad del DWU por luchar para este proyecto de ley durante años. Él dijo: “Debemos asegurar que las promesas se cumplen”.

DWU Director Priscilla González habló “como una hija orgullosa de una empleada doméstica”, y dijo: “Es un nuevo día para DWU, con más trabajo por delante para ganar vacaciones pagadas y días de enfermedad. Dignidad y respeto significan mucho para nosotros. Le debemos este gran momento para aquellos que sacrificaron su tiempo para organizarse”. □

Los federales dieron una bofetada al Sheriff Arpaio Pero sólo para reforzar su asalto a los inmigrantes

Por Deirdre Griswold

Joe Arpaio ha dirigido al departamento del sheriff en el condado Maricopa desde 1992.

Del 2004 a noviembre de 2007, Arpaio fue el objeto de 2.150 demandas en el Tribunal del Distrito y cientos más en tribunales del condado de Maricopa. Más de 50 millones de dólares de las reclamaciones fueron presentadas sobre las brutales condiciones carcelarias bajo el mando de Arpaio — 50 veces más que los juicios combinados contra Nueva York, Los Ángeles, Chicago y Houston. (Phoenix New Times, 20 de diciembre 2007)

La policía bajo el mando de Arpaio han actuado de manera tan brutal que el condado ha tenido que pagar \$42 millones de dólares en acuerdos legales a las víctimas de abuso.

Arpaio se deleita en su reputación. Su viciosa actitud hacia los inmigrantes, y ciudadanos, especialmente los latinos y latinas, lo ha convertido en el blanco de numerosas revelaciones e investigaciones.

Las protestas en su contra han sido constante y creciente, especialmente desde que su departamento comenzó a aplicar la ley de Arizona contra los inmigrantes SB1070, que otorga a la policía el

derecho de detener, registrar y arrestar a personas en la calle por la única razón de su apariencia — de perfiles raciales.

Decenas de miles de personas marcharon por las calles de Phoenix para pedir el fin a la criminalización de los inmigrantes indocumentados. Los estudiantes se han encadenado a las puertas. Las manifestaciones han estallado contra equipos deportivos de Arizona donde quiera que van. Decenas de organizaciones han respondido a la llamada a boicotear el estado hasta que la ley es anulada y han cancelado congresos y reuniones allí.

Después de que SB1070 entró en vigor y se intensificó en redadas masivas en los barrios latinos, las cárceles se llenaron tanto que Arpaio tuvo que montar una ciudad de tiendas de campañas para acomodar el desbordamiento de detenidos. El fue captado en video entre risas refiriéndose a la ciudad como un campo de concentración”. (Phoenix Times, 02 de agosto)

El movimiento de masas contra Arpaio y la ley SB1070 creció tan tumultuosa que a finales de julio, un juez federal determinó que partes de la ley eran ilegales — como la provision represiva que hizo un crimen estatal el que una persona a no llevara consigo documentos de inmigración.

Ahora el Departamento de Justicia ha

presentado una demanda contra Arpaio y su oficina por negarse a cooperar con sus investigaciones de la presunta discriminación por motivos de origen nacional — una violación de la Ley 1964 de Derechos Civiles. La oficina de Arpaio ha firmado acuerdos con el Departamento de Justicia prometiendo cooperar en las investigaciones y recibió fondos federales como resultado, pero después violó el contrato.

Es evidente que Arpaio no sólo ha hecho un infierno de la vida de cientos de miles de personas que trabajan y sus familias, sino también se ha convertido en una espina en el costado de su jefe, el Departamento de Justicia.

El gobierno federal ha estado llevando a cabo redadas contra los trabajadores indocumentados a través de Inmigración y Aduanas y el FBI. Se espera que deporta a 400.000 inmigrantes este año — un 10 por ciento más que en 2008, último año del gobierno de Bush. Sin embargo, estos organismos de la represión capitalista quieren hacerlo a su manera, sin la grandilocuencia fascistas de Arpaio y otros políticos de Arizona que están promoviendo la intolerancia contra los inmigrantes por dos razones: para ganar votos contra los demócratas y encontrar un chivo expiatorio por el inojo de las masas

populares por el desempleo y las ejecuciones hipotecarias.

Al mismo tiempo que la administración Obama está demandando a Arpaio, está enviando tropas de la Guardia Nacional a la frontera con México, donde se está extendiendo el muro entre los dos países. Es evidente que las corporaciones de EE.UU. que poseen ambos partidos Demócrata y Republicano ejercen el derecho de ir a cualquier parte del mundo para explotar a los trabajadores, mientras que al mismo tiempo, logran que el gobierno aquí estigmatice a los inmigrantes y los rodean con obstáculos insuperables con el fin de mantener a millones de trabajadores, como una fuerza laboral asediado, con bajos salarios, y sin derechos legales.

Sin embargo, los trabajadores inmigrantes y sus aliados se están defendiendo. Ellos se han llevado a cabo magníficas demostraciones del Primero de Mayo durante los últimos cinco años y son una fuerza vital en la reactivación del movimiento obrero. Un movimiento unido de la clase trabajadora que forja la solidaridad entre todas las nacionalidades y demanda la legalización es la única manera realmente eficaz para erradicar a los venenosos enemigos de la gente inmigrante como Joe Arpaio. □